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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 004963

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [KAWC](#) [KJUS](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [HR](#) [IT](#) [UN](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: CROATIA/ICTY: GOI SUPPORTS STRONG PRIVATE, NUANCED
PUBLIC, POSITION ON BOBETKO INDICTMENT

REF: STATE 188407

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CLASSIFIED BY: POL MC TOM COUNTRYMAN. REASON:1.5 (B)(D)

11. (C) DRAWING ON POINTS REFTTEL, POL MC ON OCTOBER 4 UNDERLINED TO DIRECTOR OF MFA BALKANS OFFICE MAURIZIO MASSARI USG'S VIEW THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CROATIA SHOULD COMPLY IMMEDIATELY AND IN FULL WITH THE INDICTMENT BY THE ICTY OF GENERAL BOBETKO. HE UNDERScoreD THE SERIOUS RAMIFICATIONS OF NON-COMPLIANCE, INCLUDING THE PRECEDENT THIS ACTION COULD SET FOR RESPONSES TO FUTURE INDICTMENTS AND IC SUPPORT FOR CROATIA'S EU AND NATO ASPIRATIONS.

12. (C) MASSARI SAID THE GOI HAD THE SAME VIEW AS THE USG ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GOC'S COMPLETE COOPERATION WITH THE ICTY ON THIS AND ALL INDICTMENTS. HE HAD INSTRUCTED THE ITALIAN EMBASSY IN ZAGREB ON OCTOBER 3 TO DELIVER A STRONG MESSAGE TO THE GOC, URGING THAT IT SURRENDER BOBETKO IMMEDIATELY. ON SEPTEMBER 30, CROATIAN PARLIAMENT SPEAKER ZLATKO TOMCIC HAD MET IN ROME WITH PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES PIER FERDINANDO CASINI. MASSARI SAID THAT WHEN CASINI MADE SIMILAR TOUGH POINTS, TOMCIC RESPONDED THAT THE GOC WOULD NEED "SEVERAL WEEKS" JUST TO EXAMINE THE ICTY INDICTMENT, FOLLOWED BY AN INDETERMINATE PERIOD TO RESPOND.

13. (C) MASSARI SAID THAT WHILE THE GOI FAVORS A TOUGH LINE WITH THE GOI, IT THOUGHT THAT A MORE "NUANCED" APPROACH WAS NEEDED FOR PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON THE CASE. USE OF PHRASES SUCH AS "UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER" WERE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, AND COULD CAUSE A BACKLASH WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC, POSSIBLY RALLYING SUPPORT FOR HARDLINE HDZ VIEWS. THE PUBLIC LINE SHOULD FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF COOPERATION, SUCH AS THE BENEFITS TO THE GENERAL POPULATION OF CLOSER TIES TO THE

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EU. MASSARI SAID THAT THE IC MUST CALIBRATE CAREFULLY ITS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE APPROACHES. HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT JOINT U.S./EU APPROACHES TO THE GOC, POSSIBLY AN EU TROIKA/USG DEMARCHE, COULD BE AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF SWAYING GOC VIEWS.
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